

NORTH DAKOTA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
QUARTERLY MEETING
PRAIRIE HILLS PLAZA
April 18, 2018

MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Deborah Jendro, Bruce Murry, Kirsten Dvorak, Darcy Severson, Bruce Klootwyk, Teresa Larsen, Joseph Hall, Jason Sutheimer, Matthew McCleary, Trevor Vannett, Tina Bay (2:30 p.m.)

Members Absent: Timothy Starks, Kevin McDonough, Marshall Longie, Gillian Plenty Chief, Becki Hoff

Others Present: Aimee Volk, Robyn Throlson, Mary Stammen, Patty Wanner, LouAnn Nider

Kirsten Dvorak called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. A quorum was present.

Action: A motion was made by Jason Sutheimer and seconded by Darcy Severson to accept the agenda and add budget and public comment to the agenda. Motion carried by unanimous decision.

Approval of January 18, 2018 minutes.

Action: A motion was made by Teresa Larsen and seconded by Trevor Vannett to accept the SRC quarterly minutes from the last meeting on January 18, 2018. Motion carried by unanimous decision.

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) – Patty Wanner

Patty discussed the differences between transition services and Pre-ETS. The focus today was on Pre-ETS services and the process.

- FFY 17 (October 2016 – September 2017)
 - Served 1,778 students with disabilities (combined VR and contracts)
 - Average cost per student was \$960
- FFY 18 (October 2017 –September 2017)
 - On track to meet requirements to spend fifteen dollars of the federal grant on Pre-ETS
 - Currently have contracts with 15 school districts or special education units
- FFY 19 (October 2018 – September 2019)
 - Proposals have been submitted for FFY 19
 - Willing to entertain additional proposals from rural areas

Pre-Employment Transition Services Project – Mary Stammen

Mary explained the Griggs, Steele, and Traill (GST) Multidistrict Pre-Employment Transition Services Learning Project. They serve nine counties. Students that are

involved in this project complete a multitude of trainings and they have the students explore and identify possible employment opportunities that emerge from the service learning experience.

This project is intended to serve students with disabilities in small rural schools that very few or no work opportunities are available. In the communities, there are several elderly individuals in which they coordinate with the local senior citizen facilities to have students with disabilities provide them with a variety of services. This ultimately allows comradery between generations, valuable services being delivered to elderly, and work experience for students. Currently this program is geared for students in the ninth grade through the age of 21 and those that are eligible or potentially eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation services. They have over 50 students involved in the project.

Within the scope of service they do workplace readiness soft skills curriculum (online), intergenerational interactions readiness skills, service learning skill lessons (cleaning a fridge, grocery shopping, playing cards, etc.), service learning activities (buying groceries, decorating, cleaning, making treats, shoveling snow, making tie-blanket, etc.), and employment opportunities (nursing homes, kitchen work, janitorial, etc.).

Action: Motion was made by Teresa Larsen to look into the option of producing a video on the GST project for Vocational Rehabilitation and seconded by Darcy Severson. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

Business Awards – Patty Wanner

Need to select five members for the ad-hoc committee to work with Patty Wanner. The committee will review and independently score the regional nominations which will result in a statewide winner. They will prepare and present the awards at the DVR Annual Training – Awards luncheon on October 10, 2018. The timeline is as follows:

May 29	Finalize nomination forms
June 4	Send nomination forms to the regions
July 13	Nominations are due to Patty Wanner
July 27	Nominations to the SRC Ad – Hoc Business Awards Committee for review and scoring.
August 17	Committee returns scoring to Patty Wanner
October 10	Awards presented at DVR Annual Awards luncheon

Members of the ad-hoc committee are Teresa Larsen, Joseph Hall, Bruce Murry, Jason Sutheimer, and Kirsten Dvorak.

Client Assistance Program (CAP) Report – Teresa Larsen

In fiscal year 2017, CAP had one retirement. They were able to reclassify the position as an attorney position of which was filled. They provided 16 trainings to 209 individuals. There were 40 individuals worked with CAP related to vocational rehabilitation (VR). Twenty-five were VR applicants, 14 were VR clients, and one was a transition student. Most were resolved through advocacy.

- 17 were conflicts about VR services provided
- 16 was due to communication problems between the individual and VR counselor
- 7 were related to VR application/eligibility process
- 1 was due to the IPE development/implementation.

In FFY 17 they completed the Transition-ND app and updated Launch My Life website (www.launchmylifend.com).

In the first six months of FFY18 they have opened 20 cases. If you have ideas on how CAP can do additional outreach let Teresa know.

Budget Comment – Teresa Larsen

We do not have budget guidelines at this time. The Department of Human Services (DHS) will be subject to a 10% general fund dollar budget reduction and an additional 3% contingency reduction. DHS will also be subject to a 5% FTE reduction. The SRC wanted to be supportive to VR when they do their strategic review. At this time we do not have clear guidance on when this process will begin.

Public Comment Discussion – Bruce Murry

The group decided to add public comment as a standing item on the agenda.

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Members Present: Darcy Severson, Jason Sutheimer, Joseph Hall, Kevin McDonough, Bruce Murry, Teresa Larsen, Matthew McCleary, Bruce Klootwyk, Kirsten Dvorak, Tina Bay, Deborah Jendro, Trevor Vannett (9:30 a.m.)

Members Absent: Becki Hoff, Marshall Longie, Gillian Plenty Chief, Timothy Starks

Others Present: Aimee Volk, Robyn Throlson, Cheryl Anderson, LouAnn Nider

Kirsten Dvorak called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. A quorum was present.

NDACP Workforce Development Grant – Bruce Murry

The North Dakota Association of Community Providers (NDACP) received a workforce development grant from Money Follows the Person (MFP) and the State Council on Developmental Disabilities as they both had similar goals-they both wanted qualified workers in the disability field, not just Direct Support Professionals (DSP). They hired an individual to lead the grant implementation, Erica Cermak. The goals are to increase staffing at all levels, recruit within and outside of North Dakota, train and retain Qualified Service Professionals(QSP), and train Providers so they can support their staff better enabling more consistency, better care and services. Bruce explained the differences between DSPs and QSPs as they are very different. The QSP application process is very difficult and they want to try to develop some resources that can make it less frustrating. On the DSP side (DD) they are continuing to monitor turnover. They are

having difficulty measuring how long positions are open but are finding this is very difficult and may need to look at subcontracting for the best results.

One goal is to come up with some strategies so that all counties understand the QSP program. They are trying to get more education about medical related services in the high schools for people with disabilities. Their goal is to get a pilot program out to schools.

NDACP Annual Conference is May 2-4, 2018 in Fargo.

Appeals Report – LouAnn Nider

There are no new appeals to report.

DVR Regional Updates – Devils Lake – David Kvasager

Devil's Lake serves six counties (Ramsey, Benson, Towner, Cavalier, Rolette, and Eddy). Currently, they are at 35% less in expenditures from this time last year. They are seeing a rise in applications and are expecting about 250 this year. They are not anticipating reaching their successful closure goal. It is taking about two years per case. They hired a new Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) in May. They have a Pre-ETS contract with the Peace Garden School District that serves about 47 students. In the last six months they have worked with transition students for 360 hours.

DVR Regional Updates – Grand Forks – David Kvasager

There are four counties (Grand Forks, Nelson, Pembina, and Walsh) in this region. Last year overall budgets were changed to individual counselor budgets versus a regional budget. Currently, they are down 24% in expenditures compared to this time last year. They are seeing a rise in applications but are not expecting to meet their successful closure goal. It is taking about two years from application to closure on average.

They hired an Administrative Assistant in July, a Vision Rehabilitation Specialist in November, and a Business Service Specialist in December. They will have a Senior VRC retiring in September 2018.

They have a VRC spending about 50% of their time on the Pre-ETS/transition services in which they have accrued over 1100 hours. There is a contract with the Grand Forks School District in which serves 15 students. The Griggs, Steele, and Traill contract has many students however there are only seven students in the Grand Forks region.

Committee Chair Reports

Membership/Public Relations Committee – Joseph Hall, Chair

Currently we are at 60% disability on the SRC. There are five vacancies on the council. We have reached out to individuals to see if they are interested in applying for the council. We plan on reaching out to at least two more business representatives to see if they would be interested in this council.

Discussion was held on orientation. It was decided that we would do an orientation PowerPoint presentation which would be one hour before the quarterly meeting began. We would also provide the SRC Reference Manual.

The membership committee will evaluate the bylaws and length of time in between terms and will put it on the agenda for the July meeting.

Planning and Evaluation Committee – Teresa Larsen, Chair

ND is the highest state for employment of people with disabilities. ND is also in the high category for wage earnings for people with disabilities. It was encouraged that the director shares this information at the next legislative session and to include it in the DVR Annual Report. The performance measures for the second quarter look very good. The satisfaction with VR services for the first quarter is at 95%. The state plan is currently being reviewed by the Federal Partners.

Resource Committee – Jason Sutheimer, Chair

Jason talked about recent staffing issues. These were some suggestions to retain qualified employees by having an enhanced onboarding process, offering a career develop plan (it is employee driven), and starting back on a succession plan.

Employment Committee – Bruce Murry, Chair

They reviewed taking the Discovery Process statewide. The Discovery Process is getting to know the individual. It can take three to nine months to get to know the individual and their specific strengths and what they do well. Identifying their strengths can be done through interviews, work experiences, community assessment (situational, informational interview, job tour, or job shadow. They emphasize highlighting what they can do well related to employment and identifying what are some jobs that they may be able to do in their community to find them a job they will like. VR has funding to train four to five new providers in the next three years. There is not funding for maintenance however VR is working on how to support this project moving forward. There will be a policy completed by summer 2019 including payment rates, training, etc. The SRC suggested that the Discovery Process be promoted at the next legislative session.

Action: Bruce Murry made a motion for the SRC to ask DHS senior management to pursue an OAR or other funding source to take the Discovery Process statewide and Teresa Larsen seconded the motion. Motion passed by unanimous decision.

Tribal Updates

No updates.

Next meeting July 18-19, 2018.

A motion was made by Jason Sutheimer to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Trevor Vannett. Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.